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received, gossip exchanged, and social and ceremonial obligations discussed in its shade. Here also, the men of the lineage take their meals, brought out to them from the kitchens of their wives and set before them by their sons, who first attend their fathers and then dine on what remains.

A few paces away is the grinding platform (*nere*) where the women gather to prepare the grain for their families' meals. This great circular mud table, some twenty feet in diameter, is raised about three feet from the ground. Its surface is beaten hard and worked over with cinders and manure to make it rainproof. Each woman has her assigned place at this platform where she keeps her pestle and where she stations herself at dawn and again at dusk to grind her millet and learn the news of the day.

Frequently found at the outer perimeter of the dwelling of the Mossi kin group is the house of the son of a lineage woman who has returned from his father's household to live in the benevolent presence of his mother's family, with whom he enjoys an especially permissive relationship. The house set aside for the residence of the young unmarried men of the lineage is also located on the outer edge of the compound dwelling.

A recent addition to the traditional pattern of village organization described above is the independent households of socially ambitious individuals who have chosen to separate themselves from the residences of their lineages in order to profit from their own economic or religious enterprises. Many have become independently wealthy through successful commercial ventures; others, as a result of conversion to Islam, have gained prestige through religious authority and wealth through the tuition and services provided by the Koranic students. Often these people are much younger than their lineage elders, not in line for the inheritance of political or religious authority through traditional channels, and unwilling either to accept the authority of their seniors or to share economically with the less prosperous members of their lineages. They are deviants, in conflict with the communal patterns of consumption and with the emphasis on accepting established authority which characterizes the traditional social organization of the Mossi.

THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY

Much agricultural endeavor is necessarily co-operative. Each farmer is dependent on the assistance of his kinsmen to get his fields seeded, cultivated, and harvested in the short time during which each of these operations must take place. However, the yield from his field remains his own, to be shared only with his own wives and children. Members of the lineage also work in the fields under the specific control of the lineage elder. Although the harvest from these fields is stored in the granary

[i.e. at a sun shelter in the entrance-way. — Analyst]

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belonging to him, he can be relied upon to share with the members of the lineage if this should be necessary.

Capital goods in the form of houses, granaries, and fields are the property of the lineage. Individual rights are limited to temporary use and custodianship but are passed on to others when a general shift in residence and role follows the death of a senior member of the lineage. Although property is passed on in accordance with the rules of descent in the lineage, part of the property redistributed represents the product of the labor of the lineage as a consanguineal kin group. For, as has been indicated, the labor of the wives, who are not lineage members, is as important as that of their husbands and children.

The lineage head discusses the coming year with the other elders, and an over-all production plan is made out. They decide what fields are to be left fallow, what ones are to be planted to cotton and the varieties of millet, what lands may be used by individuals desiring to plant a cash crop, and what, if any, land may be loaned to neighboring lineages or to in-laws. With the approach of the first rains, all economically active men and women go to their fields to prepare them for planting, leaving behind in the village only the old people and the children who are still too small to assist in the fields or tend their fathers' animals.

A considerable portion of the land within the limits of a Mossi village is under the direct control of the village chief (*Tenga Naba*) and the earth custodian (*Tenga Soba*), the local representatives of political and supernatural authority. This land is used for the public way, for the market place, and for burial grounds and latrines. Except for that which is too poor for any purpose, all available land within several miles of a village is put under cultivation.

Ki is the generic name which the Mossi give to the millet, which is the basic product in their economy and which receives the largest single allocation of land and labor of any Mossi economic activity. Two kinds of millet are planted, a large-grained variety (*kenda*) and a small-grained variety (*kazua*). Millet is the first crop to be planted after the rains have begun. Small- and large-grained millet seeds are frequently mixed and sown in the same field. Small-grained millet may also be sown in the same field with a white bean (*benga*). A "tired" field may be left fallow for five, ten, or fifteen years. When it is first replanted, it will be seeded to millet for the first three years. The fourth year it may again be put into millet, but if the previous crop was not good, cotton will be planted. Usually, a Mossi farmer plants cotton for two years, millet for three, then groundnuts, more cotton, then two more years of millet. It is believed that cotton renews the soil because of the intensive cultivation required: the earth is brought up into hillocks and turned over; after picking, the plant may be turned under and left to enrich the soil.

144 This is all we shall say by way of introduction to our study of Mossi customs. The main point to be remembered is that the bulk of the present Mossi population is not of "pure" origin, but results from a mixture between the Mossi conquerors and antecedent primitive groups.

000 Let us now turn our attention to work, and first of all to cultivation. We shall study the various types of labor in greater detail than we did so far in relation to the populations previously studied, and the reader will get a better idea of the work performed by the Blacks in these regions.

243 Millet is the most important item of cultivation among the Mossi, who call it ki. They cultivate various kinds of millet, and we shall take them up one by one.

First of all, the ordinary small millet, which is most widely cultivated. It is the Bambara sanio or Mossi kasui. It requires good black soil with low sand content.

243 242 Let us make the general statement that the Mossi, whenever they can, change plots every four years. That is, they clear a new field or take over an old one which has lain fallow. If they have little land, they cultivate the same plot indefinitely. In other words, they may till the same field for some twenty years.

243 When a new plot is cleared, the clearing is done in March or April. The head of the soukala goes to work with all his men. Daba /hoe/ and hatchets are used to cut down the trees. The women come along, but only to serve drink to the men, because they do not take part in the clearing.

[461 512] The workers go into the bush in the morning and remain there all day. They rest around the middle of the day (from noon to /467/ two or three o'clock), and then take up their work again until sundown. The women return home first to prepare dinner, and then the men follow. After the clearing proper has been completed, all that was torn up from the ground is gathered in a heap and set afire. The ashes are left on the soil to fertilize it. It should be noted that the roots of the trees are not removed. The trees, in fact, are merely cut about one meter from the ground, so that the field is dotted with stumps. Sometimes, instead of cutting down a tree, a small fire of branches and dry leaves is lit at its base and the

243 tree set to fire. It burns slowly, and only a slight effort is needed to cut it or topple it down.

[423] When plots are being cleared, useful trees such as karité /shea butter/ or néré /locust bean/ are spared. They remain in the field and revert to the man who is doing the clearing, the owner of the plot.

One awaits the rains before sowing, but one does not sow when the first rains fall in April. It is only in May, when the rains are frequent and the storms heavy, that the sowing is done.

A previously cultivated field is merely cleaned before sowing. While only men, as we have already seen, may clear a new plot, Mossi women as well as men share in the cleaning of a field that was cultivated on preceding years, and in the sowing as well.

The sowing is done as follows: The koutiaga (a kind of daba) is held in the left hand, while a small gourd containing millet is held in the right hand. The man or woman, squatting, makes a hole with the koutiaga with the left hand, and drops the millet into the hole with the right hand. Then some earth is replaced with the left hand.

Now the millet is allowed to grow. When it has emerged from the ground and shot about 20 centimeters, people go with the ouaka (another kind of daba) to remove the weeds growing among the millet shoots. In some areas everyone cleans up, men, women, and children. In other areas, as a rule, it is the men who carry out this task, /468/ but when they are too few the women help out. The weeding is done every morning.

Among the Mossi fields are cleaned three times between sowing and harvesting. We have already seen that the Gourounsi only do this twice.

When the millet has grown tall and the birds might peck at it, the women and children are sent to the fields to frighten the birds away.

243 343 The small millet is harvested around mid-November. When it is ripe, the stalks, 2 or 3 meters high, are cut down. They are laid upon the ground, and the heads are cut with a knife. The heads might be likened to the tip of those water reeds which bear a kind of brown velvety stem, some 30 centimeters long, rounded and about the thickness of two fingers. Once the heads have been cut off, they

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343 are tied, placed in baskets, and carried to special huts. These are small straw huts built on stakes, that is, raised on thick pieces of wood, which stand in a long curved line by the fields. About twenty such huts often stand side by side. Both men and women share in the harvesting.

243 Whenever the millet is to be eaten, the heads are taken from these straw huts and threshed with a stick to set the grain loose. This threshing is done by the men.

Aside from the ordinary small millet, it is the large red millet that is grown most extensively, as a rule, among the Mossi. They [194] call it kaziéra or kaziéga (we know that the r and g are interchangeable in Mossi; people will say, for example, either nora or noga to mean "chicken") and the Bambara call it niooulé. The large red millet is the kind used chiefly for dolo.

This is the millet that is planted before any other, as soon as the first rains begin to fall. The ouaka is used to remove the weeds which have grown in the fields, then the weeds are burned and the large red millet is sowed at the time of the first storms (April). It is sowed in the same fashion as the small millet, by holding the koutiaga in one hand and the small gourd containing grain in the other.

When the millet has come out of the ground, a fortnight /469/ is allowed to elapse and then the weeds are cleared with the ouaka. When the millet is grown, the women and children are sent out to protect it against birds. The millet is ripe around September 1.

The bulk of the harvesting work is done by the men. The stalks, which are usually 3 meters high and which may even reach 4 are cut down at the base. Once they have been dug out and laid down, the heads, which are thick and tuftlike with red flowers, are cut with a knife and carried to the soukala. The women do the carrying as they do for other kinds of millet. The large red millet is threshed only as it is needed. The threshing is done by the men with a stick.

Let us note that when a new piece of land is cleared, the large red millet is sown first to find out if the soil is good. It is only in the following year, when this has been ascertained, that the small millet is sown.

The red millet is also cultivated around the soukala, like maize.

[273] As a rule the Mossi use the large red millet only to make dolo
231 (dama in Mossi). They may also give it to horses, but some horses
262

231 will not take it. The Mossi only eat it themselves if there is no
262 other kind of millet available, or in times of famine. In any case,
[751] the red millet has a constipating effect, and when people suffer from colic they are given a to /mush/ of red millet to check the attack.

243 The Mossi also grow the ordinary large white millet, which is the kind grown most extensively, aside from sanio, throughout the Sudan. The Mossi call it baninga, the Bambara kéninguê or guessékélé. It is called kéningué around Ségou, and guessékélé around Nioro. The Nounouma call it nienso, and so do the Kassonfra /Awuna/. The Kassonboura /Kasena/ call it béninga, that is to say, they have adopted the Mossi word and slightly altered it. (We saw, in fact, that some Kassouna-Boura, at least those of Po and Tiahané, are Kassouna-Mossi rather than Kassouna-Boura.)

Europeans often give this kind of millet the name of "pearly millet" /mil nacré/ or "horse millet," because it is tender and easy to crush.

/470/ This millet is not grown by every Mossi. Those who do
[23] grow the large white millet eat it themselves. They also give it to their horses. It is cultivated exactly in the same fashion as the small millet, that is to say, it is sown and harvested at the same time.

The Mossi also grow the kipéléro or kipélégo (from ki, "millet," and pélero or pélégo, "white"). This is the yaro or yara of the Gourounsi, and probably the n'guéné or n'kendé of the Bambara and Malinké, a kind of millet intermediate between the small and large white varieties. Actually, one of my informants told me that the kipélero is sown along with the ordinary small millet, that no distinction is made between the two, and that they are used for the same purposes, while another informant maintained that it is a kind of large white millet.

The Mossi also grow some gadiaba. This is a kind of large millet which is either white or red. The Bambara call it gadiabadié when it is white, hamadiboubou when it is red. The Mossi refer to the gadiabadié as noira. They cultivate it only in Boussouma province. As for hamadiboubou, it is not to be found among the Mossi.

As far as the early millet /mil précoce/ is concerned, the Mossi are familiar with it and call it nado, but they do not cultivate it. This is the souna of the Bambara, the tiara of the Nounouma and

243 Kassouna. We have already seen that the Kassonboura once grew it extensively. The Boussansé also cultivate it.

On the other hand, the Mossi grow a little sweet millet (or tiokandé). They call it mobinoro. This is the sampa of the Bambara, the gamba of the Kassonboura. The Mossi, like the Kassonboura and Bambara, sow this millet in small quantities in the maize fields that surround the soukala. The Nounouma, Kassonfra, and Sissala do not cultivate it.

222 Aside from cultivated millet, the Mossi are familiar with the bakat or wild millet, also called "bird's millet." They call it nadanga. This is the bouaboua of the Bambara, the mintoro of the Kassouna. Among the Mossi, in times of famine, the women go and cut it down, lay it in the sun to dry and crush it, for it contains a small edible grain. There is little to be found in Gouroungа territory, although some of it does grow by the watercourses /marigots/ and could be utilized in times of famine.

243 /471/ Aside from millet, the food crop most extensively cultivated by the Mossi is maize, which they call kamana. Maize is grown around the soukala itself rather than in the bush. It is sown at the beginning of the rainy season. First the soil is turned up with the ouaka, and then holes are made with a koutiaga or hatchet. Two or three grains of maize are placed in each hole, and then covered up. Once this has been done the millet is allowed to grow, and when the stalk has come out of the ground the weeds are cleared with the ouaka. After this it takes two months and ten days for the maize to ripen. It is harvested in August, first among the grains. The stalks are dug out or cut down with a daba, or else they are simply broken by hand.

Once the stalks have been laid down, the ears are cut off. They are left to dry in the sun on the roofs, where they are suspended in [251] clusters. Then they are stored in the grain hut, from which they are removed when the kernels are to be made into flour.

252 It often happens that instead of being left to dry, the ears of maize are eaten green, roasted on the embers.

After the maize has been stored and allowed to dry, the women pound the kernels into flour. This flour is placed in boiling water to make soft cakes which are eaten immediately.

243 Maize, let us point out, is one of those crops that are harvested early. The Mossi, and as we know all black populations of West

243 Africa as well, have two harvests, one in August and the other in November-December. The latter is by far the more important, but in order to prevent famine while waiting for it, these peoples also have early, quick-growing crops that yield from the second half of July, in August primarily, up to the middle of September. Among these crops, the most important may well be the maize sown in April and harvested in August, but there are others, such as the early millet mentioned above and also the large red millet. The most important crops (small millet, large white millet), on the other hand, are sown in May or earlier, or sometimes not until July, and harvested in November and December.

/472/ The Mossi also grow a little rice (moĩ in Mossi). The kind they cultivate is water rice /riz d'eau/. It is sown along watercourses and ponds. This is the most difficult crop to cultivate, according to the old men.

[354] At the present day poor people grow a little rice. In former times they did not grow it at all, and chiefs alone cultivated it. Even now, it is largely grown by chiefs.

Rice is sown in May after millet. The field is worked with a special daba, the souga, which is used to turn up the soil. Little holes are made with a koutiaga, and from seven to ten grains of rice are placed in each hole and covered with a little soil. Then, the rice is left to grow. It comes out of the ground at the end of seventeen days. During the rainy season, the waters of the watercourse or pond cover the small rice field. Weeds are removed, inside the water, with the ouaka. The harvesting is done during the second half of October, before the small millet and large white millet are gathered. The rice stalks are cut down with a kind of scythe and spread upon the ground to dry in the sun. Then, both men and women thresh it with sticks. Sometimes the stalks are taken into the soukala instead, left to dry for three days in the courtyard, and then threshed. [351] The straw is discarded. When there is only a little rice, it is kept in a canari. When there is a lot, it is stored in baskets which in turn are placed in little straw huts raised on stakes.

262 252 The Mossi, who in short grow very little rice, claim that they prefer millet to rice. Millet, they say, provides more energy. Rice is eaten boiled, with meat if possible, and the whole thing is served with peanut or gombo /Tr. okra/ sauce.

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651 become overgrown with grass and weeds during the rainy season. This
796 clearing was done to within a few yards of the palace, but was not completed. Early in the morning of the day chosen for the actual rendering of the agricultural tribute, the retainers placed baskets of produce along these paths. During the morning ceremony, the Ouidi Naba presented a basket of millet to the Mogho Naba. Then the Bendere Naba, acting as Sore Naba ("chief of the road"), signaled on his drum, and the men with baskets who were waiting on the uncleared portion of the paths, preceded by drummers and men with hoes, axes, and other tools, began to move forward. The men in the processions raised a din, shouting, singing, drumming, and pretending that the task of clearing was very difficult. From time to time, the more energetic among those who were not carrying bundles ran ahead of the others, turned somersaults, and then, going through the motions of warriors in battle, pranced back into the procession. All the processions came to the shed occupied by the royal drummers and deposited their burdens. These were later retrieved by the palace staff and stored for use in the royal household.

643 The royal household was also supplied with produce grown by the royal
644 wives. Foodstuffs for guests and fodder for the ruler's horses were provided
241 by the people of the Bilbalgo and Dapoya wards, which were under the general supervision of the Kam Naba. Two or three times during the agricultural season, this official recruited extra help from these wards to help
[464] cultivate the fields. In recompense for this *sosogha* (work bee), the laborers
[465] were given food, drink, and kola nuts from the royal household. At the
243 end of the year, the harvesting and threshing of the grain from the Mogho
643 Naba's fields was the occasion for an elaborate ceremony, "Mogh Nab'
644 kawinre" ("threshing the ruler's grain").[2]

796 To begin this ceremony, the Mogho Naba summoned a local earth-
[791] priest, the Manougoudougou Tengsoba, to the court. This man, a descend-
[792] ant of the Ninisi, had to perform the propitiatory sacrifices to the earth deity who was symbolized by the threshing floor. After the sacrifices were completed, the Kam Naba went to the threshing floor with the young men of the Bilbalgo and Dapoya wards, who threshed the millet gathered there. The next morning they all returned to the threshing floor with the Bendere Naba and his minstrels, who recited the Mogho Naba's genealogy and sang praises to his ancestors. The drummers then beat out work rhythms and traditional drum patterns to which the workers danced while scattering the millet far and wide. Finally, the dancing stopped, and the Kam Naba drew a line on the threshing floor, dividing the pile of millet in two; the Bilbalgo people gathered one half, the Dapoya people the other. Regard-

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less of the amount of millet harvested from the Mogho Naba's fields, there had to be one hundred baskets full of grain. If the number of baskets filled with the Mogho Naba's grain fell short of the mark, the serfs and slaves had to make up the difference with the produce of their own fields. The ceremony concluded with sacrifices to the royal ancestors, after which the Mogho Naba's wives, daughters, and sisters gave beer and kola nuts to the laborers.

As head of the central government, the Mogho Naba received revenue in the form of money and livestock which the district chiefs collected from the village people. These were given to him during an elaborate annual ceremony called the "Basgha" ("feast of the royal ancestors"). Several days before this post-harvest festival, the district chiefs and their retainers arrived in the capital and lodged with their provincial ministers. At a designated time during the ceremony, the district chiefs and nobles went to the palace. In provincial contingents and led by their ministers, they walked up to the sovereign's throne and gave the Mossi salute. After they had returned to their places, their servants gave the royal pages the presents they had brought to the palace.

The Dimdamba apparently made their annual contribution to the Mogho Naba at the time of the Basgha. There is one report that they took this opportunity to send gifts to the ruler's son, the Djiba Naba, as well. The Dimdamba customarily sent the Mogho Naba part of the goods they had seized in combat against non-Mossi peoples, as well as a tax (*jado*) out of the goods they had inherited from their predecessors.[3] There is also some evidence that the Mogho Naba solicited goods from the Dimdamba at other times. Crozat says:

> During my first visit to Yako, three envoys from Ouagadougou were at the chief's house. They were tax collectors. They had come to offer the vassal a silver bracelet sent by the sovereign. The Yako Naba responded by sending horses, captives, and cowries to Ouagadougou.[4]

Crozat could not understand this reciprocity between the Mogho Naba and his vassals, and questions whether the Mogho Naba really collected taxes from them. He concludes that the Mogho Naba did receive taxes, "but these are never given to him except in the form of presents which are reciprocated."[5] Crozat found it puzzling and disturbing that many of the Dimdamba had not given the Mogho Naba any "taxes" for several years. He indicated, moreover, that they did not wish to pay taxes to the Ouagadougou ruler even under the guise of an exchange of presents. This was especially true of the Yatenga Naba, who had not sent the Mogho Naba any presents for six or seven years prior to 1890. Crozat surmised that

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For example, the villagers of Barkago traditionally cultivated and harvested a field of millet behind his compound for the chief. The people of Pinse, Donse, Passingtenga, and Tewarka cultivated millet for him in their own villages, and those of Togose and Basbedo cultivated rice for him in their excellent lowlands.

The district chief had fields both behind his compound and in the bush, which were cultivated for him by his retainers, serfs, and slaves. More than the Mogho Naba and the provincial ministers, the district chief believed that a Moaga must perform agricultural work during the planting season; to show his interest in farming, he often personally supervised the work on his plantations. When the task of weeding or harvesting proved too much for his own people, he asked his villages for a *sosogha*. On that day, each village chief, accompanied by his men, went to the district chief's fields, where, to the accompaniment of drums and chants and with the verbal encouragement of district administrators, the villages vied with each other in their task. The district chief usually sat under a tree and watched the proceedings and occasionally visited the various contingents to observe the progress made. Toward evening, the chief's wives gave the workers large quantities of food and drink in compensation for their services.

Like the Mogho Naba, the district chief had officials who collected taxes on commodities sold in local markets. These district market officials were usually serfs, Gurunsi captives, or bondsmen from other populations. Mossi rarely served in such capacities because many of the local market places were considered ritually dangerous, and their titular deities, the Tengkouga, were believed to wreak vengeance on market officials who were tardy with sacrifices. The local Kos Naba supervised the slaughtering of every animal killed in the market, kept its skin so that its ownership could be verified if necessary, and collected taxes from the butchers in the form of meat or cowries. The Raga Naba of the district was not as strict as his counterpart in Ouagadougou, and seldom imposed formal taxes on the traders. He usually walked around the market, trailed by the chief's servants, and seized calabashes of grain and other commodities, which he placed in the servants' baskets. The Raga Naba did not tax those itinerant traders or caravaneers who visited the markets in the district, nor did he interfere with them in any other way. These merchants usually had business and personal relations with the chief, and he himself handled revenue from this source. The merchants gave him goods from the forest and Sahara regions, and he in turn often gave them wives, who were thus taken out of the district.

The Mossi district chief was always on the lookout for new sources of revenue, and thus welcomed strangers into his district because they "in-